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Split Develops Over the CIA

By VICTOR RIESEL

Mr. Riesel

STATINTL

For months left-of-center, liberal critics of Lyndon Johnson's foreign policy have pounded him with some mighty big intellectual guns. They've cannonaded him from field bases in the universities, in the arts and in the professions.

But the mightiest mortar of all, criticism from a labor leader of prominence, has been missing.

Now, however, they have found one, and he has opened up.

He's the dynamic, continent-hopping, younger brother of Walter Reuther, namely, Victor George Reuther, director of the auto union's far-flung and even further-ranging international affairs department.

His opening shot—and it has been heard 'round the world was a blunt charge that President Johnson's staunchest labor supporter, AFL-CIO President George Meany, and the latter's foreign affairs specialist, the fabulous mastermind of a thousand anti-Communist offensives, Jay Lovestone, are "involved" with the Central Intelligence Agency. (Mr. Lovestone directs the AFL-CIO's international affairs dept.)

Inside labor, such a charge is as dead'y as getting up in Peking's main square and denouncing Mao as a Khrushchev revisionist.

It makes suspect all the work of the AFL-CIO's international affairs dept. These reach from championing of the Dalai Lama to cooperation in educating some 20,000 trade unionists each year in Latin America.

Such activities have ranged from the befriending of anti-Sukarno generals in Indonesia to building workers' homes in Honduras, to assisting democratic unionists in Africa to briefing the labor attaches of foreign embassies in Washington,

where, in some capitals, labor leaders knew the names only of such Americans as the recent U.S. Presidents, the Vice Presidents and that of Irving Brown, one of Mr. Lovestone's colleagues in the international dept. here.

Thus when Victor Reuther charged that "Meany and Lovestone" not only were practically CIA agents, but were spending some \$6 million in Latin America alone, they were shocked. Lovestone was in West Virginia when he had brought Mr. Meany's greetings.

The Victor Reuther charge was embarrassing, not alone to Mr. Lovestone, but to the entire American labor movement which Meany personifies.

Mr. Meany was chagrined. He had just completed plans to leave the U.S. on June 19 for a world labor congress in Brussels.

He like all other insiders knew that the charge would be hurled at him wherever he went since it was first thrown by Victor, brother of Walter, whose name is synonymous in Europe with militant unionism.

So Mr. Meany telephoned Walter Reuther. The gist of the conversation was: Did this public attack represent Walter's thinking and the position of the influential auto union?

The Detroitier replied that it did not and that he had not known of the open criticism of the Meany-Lovestone activities before Victor had unburdened himself.

Victor had given a long interview on many issues and had not especially zeroed in on the CIA charge. But he had said it.

And so it flared in excitable circles as the most sensational conversation piece in recent years.

It set the pattern of the differences between the two forces inside labor.

Victor Reuther is an intellectual and ideological colleague of such men as Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and author-economist-university professor John Kenneth Galbraith. He and they, for example, built the Committee on Free Elections in the Dominican Republic.

Victor Reuther attempted to give the committee staunch labor support. He sent letters to such influential leaders as the steel union's I. W. Abel. The latter did not join or support the group, which finally dispatched to Santo Domingo several score men led by Norman Thomas.

Committee leaders say they dispatched the ballot box observers after full discussion with Under Secretary of State Averell Harriman and other State Dept. officials.

However, Mr. Meany and Mr. Lovestone were opposed to such a committee which they believed insinuated that the U.S. and the Organization of American States would not permit free elections.

There are other sharp differences.

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